CURSE OF THE SPAWN

image

16

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TODD McFARLANE and IMAGE COMICS presents...

Sympathy for an Angel part II

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Dedicated to ROBERT SIMPSON and KYLE BAKER

CURSE of the SPAWN #15 summary

On a little known asteroid field at the Badlands Saloon and Grill, Poather relates the story of how the Last Angel Abdiel was selected for a mission to penetrate Malebolgia's realm and terminate him. After Abdiel's mission briefing and initiation into a fallen angel's disguise, he is thrown into Hell. Once there, Smuggler eagerly volunteers to be Abdiel's guide to lead him to the Malebolgia. Along the way, Lilith, Grand Duchess of the Eighth Plane, tries to seduce him and is greeted with a brief but fierce battle which attracts the attention of the Malebolgia.

TODD McFARLANE PRODUCTIONS
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CURSE OF THE SPAWN #16 January, 1998. First Printing. Published by IMAGE COMICS 1440 N. Harbor Boulevard, Suite 305, Fullerton, CA 92635. $1.95 US/$2.85 CAN. Spawn, its logo and its symbol are registered trademarks 1998 of Todd McFarlane Productions, Inc. All other related characters are TM and © 1998 Todd McFarlane Productions, Inc. All rights reserved. Any similarities to persons living or dead is purely coincidental. With the exception of artwork used for review purposes, none of the contents of this publication may be reprinted without the permission of Todd McFarlane. PRINTED IN CANADA.

"OKAY, LET'S SKIP AHEAD. SO, ABE'S BEEN UNDERCOVER IN HELL FOR ABOUT SIX MONTHS. HE'S BEEN MAKING SURE ALL THE GARBAGE STAYS IN ITS PROPER PILE -- THE LONG AND SHORT OF IT IS HE'S BECOME HELL'S VERY OWN TOWN SHERIFF. AND HE'S NOT HAVING ANY FUN. WAKE UP, CORNBOY!"
"I WAS JUST RESTING MY EYES."
LISTEN, YOU WANNA SPEND THE NEXT MONTH REGENERATING FROM WHAT I'M GONNA DO TO YOU, FINE!
YADDA, YADDA, YADDA-- IT'S GO TIME!
WHAT?
YOU HEARD ME-- OR ARE YOU DEAF AS WELL AS STUPID? YOU CHEAT!
YOU DARE! I'M THE MOST POWERFUL OF THE HELL-SPAWNS!
MOST POWERFUL WIMP, MORE LIKE IT.
YOU WANT TO FIGHT? YOU CAN FIGHT ME.
WAIT YOUR TURN, WHOEVER-- oh.
YEAH, AND I'LL... gulp.
YES, SIR. ABSOLUTELY, SIR, NO PROBLEMS HERE, SIR.
MOVE ALONG, OR AM I GOING TO HAVE SOME PROBLEMS?

HANDLED THAT QUITE NICELY.
WHAT-EVER... WHAT DO YOU WANT?
YOU WANNA MESS WITH THAT?
NOPE. POKER SAME TIME NEXT WEEK?
YEAH, BUT WE USE MY CARDS
I'VE GOT YOUR ITINERARY FOR THE DAY, AND MIGHT I ADD I'M HAPPIER THAN A PIG IN SHIT!
BECAUSE?
US FITTIN' IN SO WELL. YOU KNOW, BEIN' SO HIGH UP IN THE RANKS. MOMMA'D BE SO PROUD.
Grumph.
ANY OL' WAY, WE GOTS LOTS OF THINGS ON THE SCHED TODAY.
ZNAK!
MALEBOLGIA WANTS TO SEE YOU...
NIGHTY NIGHT... uh.
FIRST OFF WE GOTTA QUELL THAT DISTURBANCE OVER BY THE RIVER STYX--
THEM BEAVER DEMONS AT IT AGAIN. THEN--

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"POOR SMUGGLER, NOT ENOUGH BRAINS TO HANDLE EVEN A SIMPLE MESSAGE BALL. SHORTS HIM OUT EVERY TIME"
PERFECT. EXACTLY WHO I DON'T WANT TO SEE.
heh, heh... MALEBOLGIA... heh, heh...
ow!
ALWAYS WITH A LITTLE TASK HERE, DESTROY THAT THERE, LEVEL THAT, SCARE THEM.
CRUNCH
I HATE THEM ALL! WHEN AM I GOING TO GET THE SIGNAL TO ACT?
I COULD GRAB HIS TONGUE AND... AND STRANGLE HIM WITH IT. THAT'S IT. Heh. THAT'S 3,497 WAYS I CAN GET OFF HIM. BUT ALL THIS WAITING, IT'S TORTURE.
"OUR BOY WAS DEFINITELY NOT A HAPPY CAMPER.
BUT IT MUST FIT IN WITH THE PLAN. I MEAN, GOD'S WILL AND ALL... RIGHT?
TALKING TO MYSELF AGAIN. THAT'S A BAD SIGN.

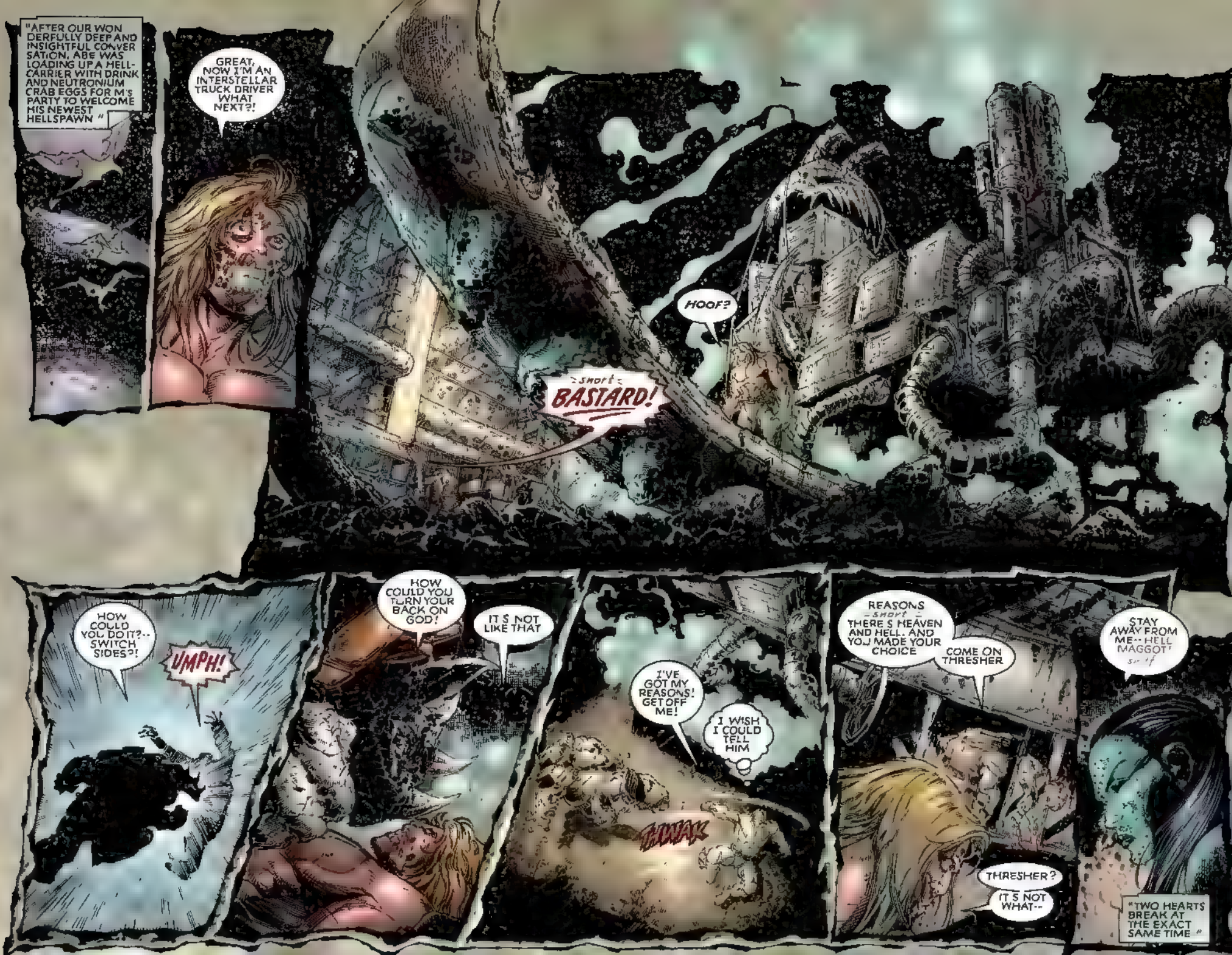
"AFTER A LONG TREK THROUGH THE STYGIAN PLAINS, ABE EVENTUALLY REACHES MALEBOLGIA'S THRONE ROOM WHERE A BIG TO-DO IS BEING PLANNED TO GREET WHAT IS SUPPOSED TO BE ONE OF MALEBOLGIA'S BEST AND BRIGHTEST TO THE RANKS OF THE HELLSPAWNS. OH, AND WHILE ON THE WAY, ABE THOUGHT OF ANOTHER 175 WAYS TO DEAL WITH MALEBOLGIA. THAT'S HIS NEW HOBBY, YOU SEE."
Ah— noxious, poisonous, odious, a truly disgusting blend... I like it.
puff puff
SIR, HERE.
OVER HERE, YOUR MODEL.
HERE, THE PLANS.
NO, OVER HERE.
WE NEED TO START ON—
DOES THIS LOOK RIGHT?
Abdiel, so wonderful to see you.
YOU CALLED?
Why, yes. You seem a bit down. Let's have a heart to heart. Worker demons leave. I want some privacy. For just us two guys.
Grumph.
SWAMP
SIR, THIS NEW TYPE OF...
...BRIMSTONE BLEND WOULD BE... uh, uh.
I said...
...I wanted privacy! Is that too much to ask?!
See. I'm a reasonable demon.
Uh-huh.
REASONABLY INSANE.

What did you do B.F... I mean, Before the Fall? Satan's fall. Have a little Mrs.? A small general store near the Mutari Nebula?
WHAT'D I DO?
IT WAS SO LONG AGO...
You do remember, don't you?
I WAS A POET.
Really? A poet. Tell me one.
IT'S BEEN SO LONG...
That's okay. With a face like yours and your dazzling charm I would've bet actor. Yes, I would.
regen
regen
regen
I DIDN'T ALWAYS LOOK LIKE THIS.
No, really, it's good. It suits you. Listen. Is it true? I heard that during the rebellion you--
IT WAS A POLICE ACTION.

A matter of semantics, really. Did you actually single-handedly kill 25 of your own kind?
I WAS ATTACKED AND I'D RATHER NOT GO INTO IT.
Fine. fine. Don't get me wrong. I'm glad. Twenty-five more fallen angels around here would quite simply make this place "hell." If you know what I mean.
But it must be hard to be an angel. Never really knowing if you're doing the right thing.
WHAT DO YOU MEAN?
Here, there is a loose order to things... do what you want if you can get away with it. But in Heaven you have a bureaucracy, departments within departments, orders within orders.
YOU INFURIATING PEST.
YOUR POINT?
I mean, you never know if you're getting the skinny or not. I mean, whether you're following God's will or just some fool general who thinks he knows God's will.
COULD HE KNOW?
IT ALL COMES DOWN TO FAITH.
Yeah, I know that one. But I think the whole thing got screwed up somewhere, Hell vs. Heaven and all. I mean, if God didn't want us to exist, would we? It's like a friendly game between brothers that got out of hand and no one remembered to end it.
Think about it.
Now since you've finally regenerated I'll try that new blend. You were very rude before, you know...

"LATER, ON THE WAY TO GET PROVISIONS FOR M's PARTY..."
DAMN DEMON, HE'S JUST TRYING TO CONFUSE ME. I DON'T THINK HE REALLY KNOWS.
BZZZZZZ
Uh-oh. I KNOW THAT NOISE.
KROOM
NOT AGAIN...
WOULD YOU PLEASE STOP DOING THAT, SIR?
Hurumph. I JUST WANTED TO LET YOU KNOW THAT EVERYTHING IS RIGHT ON TRACK. A.SIMMONS SHOULD ARRIVE ANY DAY NOW. AND WHEN HE DOES I'LL SIGNAL YOU TO TERMINATE MALEBOLGIA AND RETURN WITH A.SIMMONS TO HEAVEN.
THERE'LL BE A MEDAL IN IT FOR YOU, SON.
I DON'T REALLY WANT ONE, SIR. BUT IF I MAY I'D LIKE TO HAVE MY BREAST PLATE.
YOU ARE UNDERCOVER, COMMANDER-- YOU KNOW YOU CAN'T WEAR IT.
I KNOW. I JUST WANTED TO GIVE IT TO SOMEONE FOR SAFE-KEEPING.

"LATER, BACK AT MY PLACE..."
I DON'T KNOW.
JUST KEEP IT FOR ME. I'LL BE BACK FOR IT... AND IF I DON'T MAKE IT BACK, IT'S ALL YOURS.
"MY KEEN SENSES TOLD ME ABE WAS IN A QUANDRY. IN NEED OF COUNCIL. SO, I OFFERED SOME INCREDIBLY WISE ADVICE."
"WHAT'D YOU SAY?"
"YOU'D NEVER UNDER-STAND."
OKAY... uh... WANT A DRINK?
SURE.
HELL, IT MIGHT EVEN MAKE A GOOD CONVERSATION PIECE.

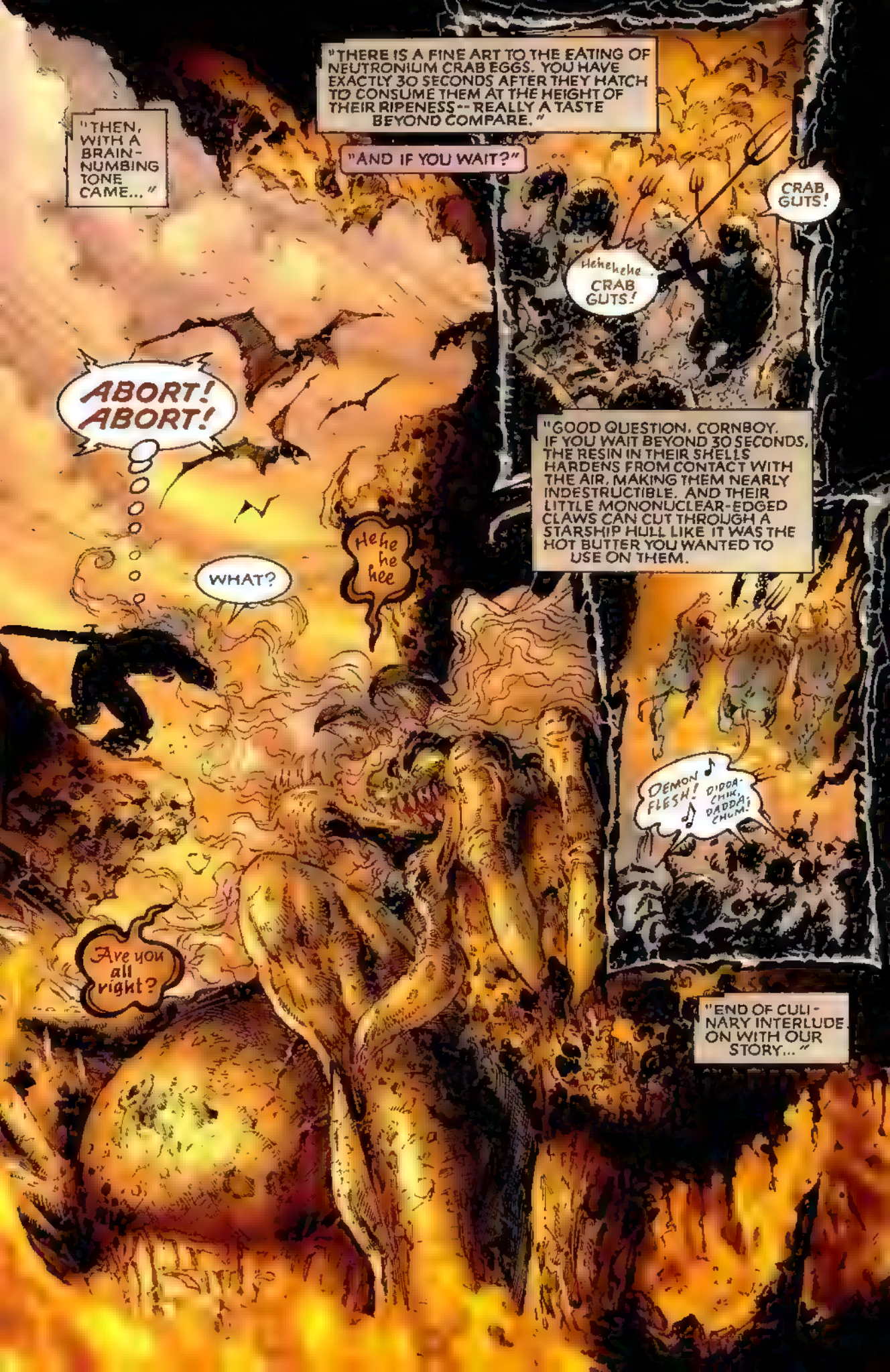

"AFTER OUR WONDERFULLY DEEP AND INSIGHTFUL CONVERSATION, ABE WAS LOADING UP A HELL-CARRIER WITH DRINK AND NEUTRONIUM CRAB EGGS FOR M'S PARTY TO WELCOME HIS NEWEST HELLSPAWN "
GREAT, NOW I'M AN INTERSTELLAR TRUCK DRIVER WHAT NEXT?!
HOOF?
~SHORT~ BASTARD!
HOW COULD YOU DO IT?-- SWITCH SIDES?!
UMPH!
HOW COULD YOU TURN YOUR BACK ON GOD!
IT'S NOT LIKE THAT
I'VE GOT MY REASONS! GET OFF ME!
I WISH I COULD TELL HIM
THWAK
REASONS ~SHORT~ THERE'S HEAVEN AND HELL. AND YOU MADE YOUR CHOICE
COME ON THRESHER
THRESHER?
IT'S NOT WHAT--
STAY AWAY FROM ME-- HELL MAGGOT!
"TWO HEARTS BREAK AT THE EXACT SAME TIME "

I'M AN ANGEL, I SERVE GOD... I'M NOT SOME HIRED THUG OR ASSASSIN. AM I? I M A POET... I CAN PROVE IT.
NO!
JUST THINK OF THE OLD DAYS WHAT SHOULD COME NEXT?
"BUT NO MATTER HOW HARD HE TRIED NOTHING MORE WOULD COME. PERHAPS HE WAS TOO OUT OF PRACTICE. MAYBE THAT PART OF HIM DIED LONG AGO. FOR WHATEVER REASON, HE COULDN'T WRITE A SINGLE LINE. AND HIS RAGE WAS EPIC.
ARGGGH!
"AND IT HAD A TARGET."
YOU SHALL PAY!

"ABE RETURNS TO THE THRONE ROOM TO FIND MALEBOLGIA PRACTICALLY GIDDY."
Boys! My nose isn't that big... Wait, I don't have a nose, hehehehe... just testing. get on with it!
We must hurry--the time is almost at hand--careful with those crates!
HE THINKS HE'S FUNNY
YEAH A REAL RIOT
Remember, neutronium crab eggs can be very nasty if not treated properly.
And I want everything just perfectly horrible for our new arrival! He should land right there in the circle of five.
WHEN IS HE COMING?
He's already on his way--I'll show you.
NOW? WHERE ARE MY ORDERS?!

There. On earth. The foolish Jason Wynn and his sidekick Priest. Amoeba with the ambition of gods... they fulfilled their small roles adequately.
And there, my prize, Al Simmons. Burned alive. It's good that he gets used to the fire. It's ever so much hotter down here!
ARGGGH!
And herrre's...
...Al!
hehe hehe he he
HOW!
Look, just like a new-born.
UHHH
Aw, look. It's trying to talk... soon... soon, my precious.
W-H

I'D BETTER GET IN POSITION. I'LL USE METHOD 237. I'LL BUTT MY HEAD THROUGH THE BACK OF HIS SKULL. MAKE IT SHORT AND SWEET.
You know, it really is quite silly...
CLOSER
...all this "my army's bigger than yours"...
CLOSER
...I mean, if an angel is so set on doing God's will then he shouldn't be afraid to ask him..
SHUT UP!
...if you can find him, that is-- I don't think he's even around anymore--
I'M GOING TO FINALLY BE RID OF YOUR CONSTANT JABBERING!
--you just go and ask him.
YOU ASK HIM FOR ME


"THERE IS A FINE ART TO THE EATING OF NEUTRONIUM CRAB EGGS. YOU HAVE EXACTLY 30 SECONDS AFTER THEY HATCH TO CONSUME THEM AT THE HEIGHT OF THEIR RIPENESS -- REALLY A TASTE BEYOND COMPARE."
"AND IF YOU WAIT?"
"THEN, WITH A BRAIN-NUMBING TONE CAME..."
CRAB GUTS!
Hehehehe CRAB GUTS!
"GOOD QUESTION, CORNBOY. IF YOU WAIT BEYOND 30 SECONDS, THE RESIN IN THEIR SHELLS HARDENS FROM CONTACT WITH THE AIR, MAKING THEM NEARLY INDESTRUCTIBLE. AND THEIR LITTLE MONONUCLEAR-EDGED CLAWS CAN CUT THROUGH A STARSHIP HULL LIKE IT WAS THE HOT BUTTER YOU WANTED TO USE ON THEM.
ABORT! ABORT!
WHAT?
He he hee
DEMON FLESH! DIDDA-CHIK, DADDA-CHUM!
Are you all right?
"END OF CULI-NARY INTERLUDE ON WITH OUR STORY..."

YOU ARE TO RETURN TO BASE. I REPEAT--
I'M STILL IN POSITION!
THAT IS A BIG NEGATIVE, COMMANDER! RETURN TO BASE NOW!
WHAT THE @#$% ARE YOU?
I-- I'M AN ANGEL.
LOOKIN' LIKE THAT! THEN, I MUST BE IN HELL.

"ON ABE'S WAY BACK TO BASE M'S WORDS CONTINUED TO ECHO IN HIS ANGRY HEAD: "SHOULDN'T BE AFRAID TO ASK HIM." LIKE SOME CHEAP POP TUNE, OVER AND OVER."
CHERIOUR!
I KNOW YOU MUST BE DISAPPOINTED. B-BUT WE WERE ACTING ON ERRONEOUS INFORMATION MAIN BRANCH JUST INFORMED US. YOU SEE, SIMMONS IS SUPPOSED TO BE A HELLSPAWN, TO FIT WITH HIS PLAN.
SORRY, SON, BUT WE ALL HAVE ORDERS TO FOLLOW.
LISTEN, CHERIOUR, WHAT ARE YOU, 5th ORDER?!
YOU'VE PROBABLY NEVER EVEN SEEN GOD! WHERE WERE YOU DURING THE FALL AND THE BATTLE?! I USED TO REPORT DIRECTLY TO GOD!
JUST HIM AND ME! I'M GOING ABOVE YOUR HEAD! YOU HEAR ME?!
Gulp
BUREAUCRACY! MALEBOLGIA RAN THINGS BETTER.
UMMPH!
SHOULD WE GO AFTER HIM?
NO. IT'S OUT OF OUR HANDS.
"AND SO IT WAS."

' ABE HAD SET EVENTS IN MOTION THAT HE WAS FAR FROM ABLE TO CONTROL HIMSELF. ESPECIALLY IN HEAVEN. "
YES, DEAR. Oh, I KNOW-- St. PETER AND THAT NEW GIRL THERESA, A BEAUTIFUL COUPLE-- uh, SORRY DEAR, GOTTA GO.
ABDIEL, LONG TIME NO SEE. HOW ARE YOU?
I NEED TO SEE GOD.
NO, I NEED TO SEE HIM NOW. IT'S AN EMERGENCY.
ISN'T THAT ALWAYS THE CASE.
uh-huh... FINE
I CAN FIT YOU IN... IN ABOUT A MONTH.
YOU KNOW IF I LET IN EVERYONE WHO WANTED TO SEE GOD BECAUSE OF "SOME EMERGENCY," WELL, LET ME TELL YOU--
-- GUR FLUF BURM...
PAUL, YOU ARE HUMAN, I'M AN ANGEL. YOU FEEL PHYSICAL PAIN. I DON'T.

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OKAY, OKAY.
"PAUL WAS NEVER MUCH ON BACKBONE."
CLICK
SIR, I'M SORRY. I COULDN'T KEEP HIM OUT.
NO!!
YES, IT HAS BEEN A WHILE
THE POINT? YES, SIR. WELL, I ALMOST FEEL SILLY ASKING BUT... I NEED TO KNOW.
AM I DOING YOUR WILL?
SIR? IT'S ME, ABDIEL.
CRACKLE CRACKLE CRACKLE
CRACKLE CRACKLE Pop!
"SET UP. HE WAS SET UP BY A MASTER. THE ONLY ONE WHO KNEW GOD WOULD KICK HIM OUT FOR EVEN ASKING.

"AND HE EVEN HAD THE NERVE TO BE WAITING, JUST WAITING THERE IN HELL FOR HIM TO LAND. HE EVEN HAD A PRESENT FOR HIM, ALL WRAPPED UP IN A BOW."
I know you probably aren't too happy to see me. And I know you'll need some time to adjust. But, I just wanted you to know there will always be a place for you here.
KHOOM!
"WHAT WAS IT? WHAT WAS THE PRESENT?"
Oh, I THINK THAT'S ABOUT IT. I ALREADY PUT CORNBOY TO SLEEP.
AW, COME ON. HOW DOES IT END?
GLASS OF BORELLIAN WINE!
WHAT KIND OF AN IDIOT WOULD ASK FOR SOMETHING LIKE THAT?!
"I TRY TO STOP HIM..."

WHAT YOU LOOKIN' AT, KID?
WHY YA STILL KEEP THAT OLD THING ON THE WALL?
SENTI-MENTAL REASONS, ABE.
...I -- I'M OUTTA HERE. I'M GOIN' HOME.
HAHAHA HA HAHA I KNEW HE WOULDN'T LAST
ABE? HEY, YOU'RE--
WHAT'S WITH THE NEWBIE?
WOULDN'T YOU RATHER HEAR THE ONE ABOUT THE DEMIGOD WHO BOUGHT ORION FOR 10,000 CREDITS??
OUCH, OKAY. BUT I'LL HAVE TO JOIN YOU IN THAT BORELLIAN WHITE.
YEAH, YEAH. IF YOU LISTEN TO ONE OF MY NEW COMPO-SITIONS.
"I KNOW HE'S WEARING A SYMBIONT. BUT HE'S NOT WITH HELL... OR HEAVEN, FOR THAT MATTER. HE'S JUST ONE OF THOSE SHADES OF GREY IN BETWEEN. AND I LIKE TO THINK MAYBE THAT'S GOD'S WILL TOO-- 'CAUSE IT SURE MAKES ABE HAPPY. AND I'LL DRINK TO THAT."
The End

BlahBlahBlah

BlahBlahBlah_63
w/terry fitzgerald
tdfitz@aol.com

Let's get the pics out of the way first shall we...Top right pictures are the video boxes of the upcoming Spawn movie video release set for this December 23rd. Orders for the video have been very strong, so expect to see the video in all of your favorite rental shops. The only version to be released at sell-through price in December ($25) will be the DVD version. The laser disc shall hit the shelves in late January for about $35, and the two videos will hit sell-through around April. Confused?

The rental video out this month, shall appear in two forms, the PG-13 version as seen in theaters here in the US/Canada and a Director's Cut- "R"-rated" version that was the theatrical release version for Japan, France, etc. Why the two versions? Well, the MPAA censor board is a little more harsh here than compared to Japan, let's say. There they love violence. They can't get enough. This "Director's Cut" version includes a couple scenes that were trimmed from the US version. I would recommend this version myself.

The second photo features the fearless leader of our fine corporate entity, the Chairman and CEO himself, Todd McFarlane. This photo was going to be used in our annual corporate report, but we decided on a photo that was a tad less conservative. OK, so it's really Todd dressed as believe it or not, Tina Turner for Halloween this year. (I'm dressed as Ted Adams from WildStorm by the way. If you know Ted, you get the joke.) With all of the excitement that was being generated from under Todd's dress, I presume he just could not keep his lips off of my beckoning melon. God bless that man.

Back to biz. I just returned from Tokyo where I met with every one of our licensees, about 26 as well as Sony Music, Sony Pictures Japan, GaGa Productions, etc. Sony Music is releasing the soundtrack there and the early numbers look really good. (Remember the movie does not get released there until February.) Sony Pictures is interested in producing an animated Spawn for the theaters, ala "Akira" or "Ghost in the Shell". GaGa is the company that is releasing the movie in Japan, as well as the animated series on video. I also visited the folks at Mad House Animation who were busy working on the new series of HBO animated Spawn due to hit the tube in May 1998. I also saw animation for a feature film they have in the works for ...2000, based on "Vampire Hunter D". That's how long it takes to produce one of these works of art.

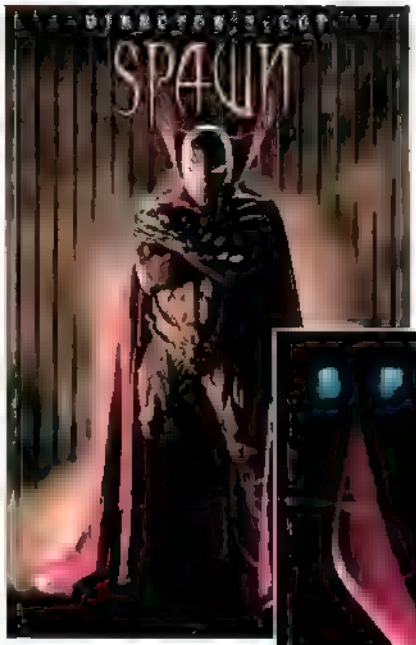
For those of you who are big fans of Akira, I was lucky enough to see a ten minute preview of Otomo's latest work, entitled "Steam Boy". As the title implies, it's about the grandson of the inventor of the steam engine, and takes place in victorian England. What I saw, as little as I saw, was incredible. Otomo's sense of style and direction is unsurpassed. If only we could get him on the Spawn animation! He actually is a big fan of Spawn and will be doing a joint interview with Todd when we are back in Tokyo next month. Looking forward to meeting the man.

The Spawn PlayStation game is out and about, with a killer looking chromium cover.

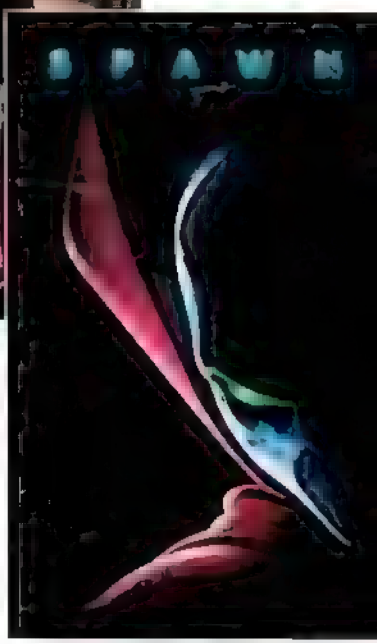
Until next month.

terry fitzgerald

p.s. Happy 56th Birthday to Beau Smith, you don't look a day over 49!



R-rated Director's Cut



PG-13 Version

Curse Words
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Esteemed Alan McFarlane

I am writing this letter to offer some of the first true criticisms of your writing. Your story ideas are simply incredible but you use way too much narrative text. This really interrupts the flow of the comic. If you are going to have such detailed art in the book, let IT do some of the work for you. Comics are a synergy between art and story and you are kind of throwing hitches in the flow. The narrative text takes up say about 80% of the text in your comics.

I hope that you will take this as constructive criticism instead of petty complaining because I truly enjoy your writing. I don't think you are bad quite the opposite. I think you are very good. But you could be GREAT. Considering the fact that this is your first work in comics (that I know of) you already are great. Each of your story arcs has had a distinct feel to it and what really impresses me is that each story line roughly corresponds to what was going on in the original Spawn issues (1-4 birth of a Spawn, 5-8 the detectives Sam & Twitch, 9-11 Angela, 12-14 Spawn's killer). Is this intentional?

Anyway, I'll not make this a long letter but I would appreciate any kind of response you could give.

Sincerely,
Shawnesey Ryan O'Hern
Titus, Alabama

Alan writes,

Well, yes, I have been told more often than I'd like to admit, that I write too much narrative for the comic book and you'd be surprised how much I've actually cut back. I'm a novelist at heart; there's just something in me as a writer that says if I'm not filling up the page I'm not holding up my end of the deal and not earning my paycheck. Nevertheless, comics are a visual medium and I am still learning how to approach it effectively. I will, for the sake of Dwayne and Danny as well as long suffering copy editor Tom, try to reduce my narrative without giving up the feel of the material. I want what I write to enhance, not detract from or slow down the pace of the story in any way. I ask you to bear with me; I'm still in comic book pre-school and as soon as I learn to use the potty I hope my writing will improve and everyone, including me, will benefit. I find graphic novels an unusually rewarding medium and hope to someday create a book of my own.

To answer your other question, no, the story paralleling is a complete fluke. Wow, how strange! But then Spawn and I have always been in sync for some reason. Guess I should worry. Anyway, thanks for the letter and by the way GREAT NAME!

Dear Mr. McFarlane,

We are friends from Draper Utah. We love to collect comics and we think Spawn comics are the best. We have two ourselves, but have read many more from our friends. The two great Spawn comics we have are Curse of the Spawn #11 and we also have Spawn #64. We have been trying to find more Spawns in comic book stores but have failed. We were wondering if you could tell us where to find some more.

We have seen the movie, also. It's great. We like the Spawn action figures and we are wondering where we can get some and about how much they cost.

We think that the Curse of the Spawn comic books are much better than the original Spawn comics because the original comics just drag on about the same character but the Curse of the Spawn comics use more than one character.

Please answer these questions and write back. Thank you for your awesome comics and time.

Dedicated Spawn fans,
Shane, Clay & Mack
Draper, Utah

Thanks for writing your letter and let's see if we can't answer a few of your questions. It is actually completely out of my control which stores have my comic books and which don't but there is a toll free number called the comic shop locator service. You can call this number and they will tell you which stores closest to you carry comic books. They'll give you the phone number and you can call those establishments and ask them for anything specific you might need. That number is 1-888-comic-book or 1-888 266-4226. Give it a try. If a store isn't carrying some of the Spawn product at this time, I'm hoping it's because they're sold out or they've had a rush on it in the last five or six months instead of them just not carrying product that is getting more well known to the people on the outside.

I'm also glad that you like the single issues of the Curse of Spawn. I find it somewhat amusing that one of the reasons you don't like the regular Spawn book is because it is an ongoing story about the same guy over and over and over. Ultimately, that is what Batman, Spiderman, and Superman have been for over 30 years and it's one of the goals that I'm trying to follow in terms of longevity. We'll continue to give you the short story arcs and at the same time develop the characters that will be around for literally decades.

Dear Mr. McFarlane,

I'm writing this letter to you after reading Curse of the Spawn #13-14 and I think these issues were great. I really didn't know much about Priest before, but now I know what I needed to know.

Anyway, I've been following Spawn since issue #1 and always been a great fan. Curse of the Spawn is an excellent second book for the greatest comic anti-hero there is. I've never owned a Spawn figure until yesterday when I picked up Manga Spawn and he's just an incredible looking figure. I plan on getting the rest of Series 9 soon.

I really like the cartoon and I'm glad it has violence in it, because it just fits the dark mood the comic portrays. I'm sorry to say that I didn't see the movie when it came out. I have a phobia where I can't really go out anywhere but my brother picks up my Spawn comics every month so I don't miss out on the great action.

Will you be doing a Manga style story in Curse of the Spawn any time soon. The reason I ask this is because I always wanted to see Spawn drawn in the Manga style and I did think it'd be cool.

This is the first time I've written to a comic so please print my letter in the next issue of Curse of the Spawn.

Chris Egintis, Age 25
Bensalem, Pennsylvania

I thought Alan did an excellent job in flushing out the Priest character so that you would have a little more background on what she is about. Although she is just a puppet being used by both Jason Wynn and Chapel, she is the one that pulled the trigger causing Spawn's death. Hopefully, I'll be able to come up with other characters that are on the fringe that we can develop so you can look forward to reading about them.

As for your idea about creating a Manga Curse of Spawn, we actually have a deal going on in Japan right now where they are doing a Spawn comic book Japanese Manga style that eventually I have the rights to reprint over here in America. So if you're patient we'll get around to showing you how those turned out.

Glad you liked the toys. Series 10 will also have a Manga style to it because when I was younger, I always thought that it was a neat style.

Answering your comment to the animated show, the violence isn't in there for the sake of violence. The first six episodes I really wanted to start off with a bang and that meant physically doing something that would wake people up to the show. However, I know that if I am going to have any long term success with the animated show, I'm going to have to give good stories and not rely on doing gratuitive acts of violence to get the attention of people. You're still going to have that dark urban feel to it but we're going to be concerned with flushing out the characters and not worrying about whether we slaughter a handful of people every show. Be patient and stay tuned for the evolution.

Dear Todd McFarlane,

You may have already read my last letter to Spawning Ground. I decided I'd rather get Curse of the Spawn because there weren't many issues out so I might not have missed out on much.

The newest issue is great but it is the only issue I have read. By the way, can you put a little more gore in them. I love gore, that's why I'm asking.

I know you don't number the pages but on the page where Jessica has all those weapons, are those guys drawn on the TV screen or is it a picture?

Do you know where I can get my hands on Curse of the Spawn issue #1? Thank you for your time?

Justin Preece
Grove City, Ohio

Let me welcome you into the fold of the Spawn world, Justin. If we go back to my previous answer, I don't mind putting violence into any of my comic books if the action is warranted by the story's flow. Just to put in gore for the sake of gore like you're asking doesn't really make much sense to me. It just takes away from you caring about who these characters are and putting them in situations where you'd be inclined to hope that either something good or bad happens to them. It is stories that you get enraptured with that make you want to see the action unfold in front of you. We'll just make sure the stories dictate exactly what the pictures are showing and vice versa and give you the best that we can give.

In your quest for hunting down the back issues of the Curse, take a look at the number I gave out in an earlier letter and phone your local comic shop to see if they have any of the books that you are specifically looking for.

The guy drawn on the TV screen is actually a computer enhanced drawing. We can scan a photo in on our end and then amalgamate it in with the black and white drawings that we do before it's colored on the computer screen. There is a lot of computer manipulation that goes into making a comic book these days.

Dear Curse Words,

I just saw the advertising of the animated series of Spawn in HBO Ole and I wanted to share my happiness with you. Here, it is difficult to obtain things about Spawn, but we have some of the most beautiful women of the world (at least in South America). I don't think I will be about to see the Spawn movie in the cinemas from here and that's why I'm counting the days to buy the Spawn movie video.

I want to congratulate Alan McElroy, Terry Fitzgerald, Todd McFarlane, Greg Capullo and all the staff who make this comic go on. You are the greatest! Where do you get your ideas for the stories? It is great to think about an infinite war between the good and the evil, among Hell and Heaven and it could be true (why not?). Also you guys exhibit some of the realities of our world, the violence, the poverty, the society and other things of which one is not so proud. You write of things that are here and are universal like the Future series, the cops are the same around the world or in the Spawn comic series, the reality is that there are crazy people and madness everywhere but not all of them want to kill everyone who crosses their paths.

Now I want to ask you where I could subscribe to get some of the Image Comics regularly? Also, who are the faces that appear from time to time in the comic like the face on the TV on page #19 in Curse of the Spawn #14?

We will continue to follow you and buy your projects here and in the world over.

PS My little sister says: congratulations to the penciler of Curse of the Spawn. He's the greatest.

Sincerely, your fan for life,
Federico A. Stasyszyn
Cordoba, Argentina

One of the hard things about dealing with our fans in international locations is that each country has a different set of rules dealing with what's acceptable in terms of censorship and the kind of distribution available in each country. It seems that we can go in to some places around the world where Spawn is starting to leak in at a fairly steady trickle and in other places there is still a big upward climb in getting in to the country and gaining accessibility not only to the fans but to the public as a whole. With the HBO series continuing, they will be repackaging it to different outlets that will be airing those in the international countries. Also, as we race toward a sequel around the year 2000, our hard work at this end will only make it easier for many of the products you like to collect to get into your hands easier.

Dear Curse Words,

I read the Curse of the spawn #14. I think it is phat (nice). Especially the action part when Jessie battles the evil big monster named Zack. I liked it a lot. When she shot him like 20 times, when she kicked him and knocked him in the face off the cliff and he drowned in the water.

PS keep track of your Spawn comics because it is all good.

Johnse Allende
San Juan, Puerto Rico

Nice to see another fan that lives outside the continental US. Alan McElroy, with the assistance of Brian Haberlin the last couple of months, will continue to bring you stories based upon characters we can give more exposure to while at the same time trying to tie them into the bigger picture of the regular Spawn comic book. Thanks for grabbing on to our little game here. We're going to continue the march forward and hopefully make it bigger and better.

Dear Mr. McFarlane,

I just finished reading issue #10 of Curse of the Spawn and I have to say that it was good, but I have to ask you two questions. Why did Spawn call it "Rat City" and why was there a head in the clouds. Thanks for your time and I will happily await a reply.

Sincerely,
Daniel Jame Emrani
Flushing, New York

I can't answer one of your questions, given that I don't have issue #10 in front of me as I'm on a plane headed for Japan right now. I can answer why Spawn calls the back alleys Rat City. It was a term that was dubbed so by Alan McElroy, not from the comic book and not from the movie, but from the HBO series, which he originally wrote the first season. Although there are back alleys and bowerys in the backside of the Manhattan buildings in New York, I wanted to create a place beyond the back alleys within the confines of the alleys themselves, an even a deeper, spookier place that even the homeless and the criminals don't venture in to. A place that scares the people who normally live in the alleys, Rat City is a place where the homeless people are afraid to go into and Spawn likes to live because he knows he's not going to get bothered nearly as much as he would if he were a block away from 42nd street. He is much better off being in the heart of this derelict society that has a very dense kind of atmosphere and spooks a lot of people from going down there.

EndCap

McFarlaneToys EndCap P.O. Box 27228 Tempe AZ 85285-7228 McFToyClub@aol.com

Continuing up in January with our line of Spawn Movie Playsets. Based on scenes from the hit movie, these sets of figures have all the features we've come to expect from McFarlane Toys. These playsets are also in scale with the Monster Series line of previously released and the those sets have ONE figure as a diorama.

First up is the Spawn Graveyard Playset. Straight from the movie, this scene has Al Simmons learning of the destruction he has become a Spawn. Pressing down on the break apart gravestone makes the ground fly open revealing the decayed remains of Simmons with an intact cop skull and suit. The playset, the Clown figure can hold the novel "Klown" As well as several Hell's army and Spawn Pursuer figures, might in mid-transformation with mud and grime. Also available separately wrapping itself around the base.

The Spawn Alley Playset recreates the scene where Violator first makes his appearance. Spawn, unsure of his powers, has only a gun and chains to defend himself with – but it's enough to take on the Violator. He can swing from the alley lights with the flowing chains. The Violator can walk through the break-away wall of use his specially created arms. Available at Spawn, be sure to look closely at the glow in the dark graffiti on the building's visible.

The Final Battle Playset rounds out the assortment. Like in the movie, the fireplace is actually a secret entrance to Hell. Access is by pushing down the flames to open the doorway. The Violator morphs through the wall and can be manipulated from behind the playset with the enclosed rods. Spawn himself has a full spiked attack made with chains flowing from his chest to help defend his loved ones. The fireplace even comes with a full set of instructions.

As these playsets start shipping in January and should be in your local stores by the end of the month. Now on to the letters.

Jaime Gibson Jr. of Saugus California asked about toy advertisements. He always sees Power Rangers and Batman figures on sale but never any of McFarlane Toys in the flyers. No, it's not like we don't want them to show our figures. Most stores advertise for two reasons: they need to move the product because it isn't selling or they want you to know that you can get those products and a lot more) from them. Selling our stuff is not a problem for stores at least while the product is "new". Sure as the Series 9 comes out it's harder for them to sell series 8 but since many stores only have a two to three month "shelf line" on toys (versus they put them on sale that doesn't jive with the equation) they won't advertise figures that are old and don't need to advertise new figures to sell out.

What about "loss leaders?" That's a way to get people into the store just by showing them something they can't find other places like KISS figures. Well our toys are a good or that providing stores get enough of them. There have been a few times that major stores BIG list our product in the flyers (KISS figures, for instance). There they were really surprised at the turn-outs and had to issue rain checks. This is because of the way we ship our toys. We try to make it fair to EVERYONE and not just ship all of one boatload to only one chain. So the first two boats may get divided up amongst 20 chains and 200 smaller stores each only getting 20% of their order. The next allocation may give them all another 25% and add more chains and small stores into the mix. But no one has their entire order even though the toys have been shipping for a month. This way even people who are shipped "last" have some to start with. A store like Enters 20,000 figures of an assortment doesn't want to put them in their ads and they have a lot of them. Unfortunately by then the items may not be "hot enough" to use as a draw.

Christopher Magill of Albuquerque NM asked a few questions.

How long after the retails stores get the toys do we wait until we offer them through the club?

2. Are Action figures available or just store ones?

3. Are original figures available again once they sell out through the club?

4. What about club exclusives. Are they going back to press?

5. Why do something as same as the gold figures? And

6. Why not do a promo book as a guide to all the McFarlane toys and variations?

We usually wait about six months before we offer something through the club. This gives stores time enough to sell through so we aren't competing with them.

2. We don't offer all the figures but we do try and make sure the list of "rare" ones are available even if we have to make more.

3. Once something sells out we are reluctant to make more. We don't want to make TOO many of some things and have them taking up all the room in our warehouse. But we have gone back and made some figures. It's based on an individual basis.

4. Once club exclusives like Red Angela sell out that's it. They are offered for a limited time and that's one of the benefits of being an early member you get stuff that will NOT be offered again after.

5. The gold figures were made to order for KayBee Toys who wanted something that seemed "premium" and "special". They've been very happy with them so far and undoubtedly will try and order more next year.

6. There was a really good photo book done in Japan that featured all of our figures, including variations and specials. This "Mook" as it was called is being translated and redone for the English market. More word on it when we have a shipping date.

Nate Ross of Orlando Florida said that he's seen more of the "first series" of KISS figures in stores now and wanted to know if they are a re-issue or what. Actually we never stopped making the figures with the stands. However, we could make a lot more figures each week than we could stands so the stands were holding up production. We decided to ALSO make them with record albums to fill up the rest of the order's production. Thus there are still as many action stands being made each week as there ever was but there are more figures to meet the demand.

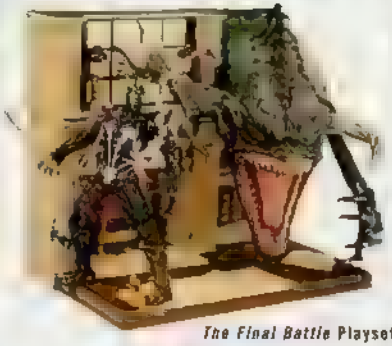
Nige Peavy from Adelaide Australia sent an e-mail that asked about the distribution rights for our toys in foreign lands. Are they only offered to one company and if so is there a way that people can find out. Currently international distribution is done by different companies but you really don't need to know who the DISTRIBUTOR is in your area. You need to know what STORES carry the figures and when they get them in and that's the problem since distributors can't force any store to order things. The distributor would be more than happy to sell all the figures but they need someone to order them in the first place. Plus there's the whole customs and the target country's mercantile regulations that may block certain figures from ever reaching your shores.

Winner of the Green Cosmic Angela for best letter of the month this month: Angel of Stillwater Oklahoma. This is the Halloween outfit she wore this year and while she didn't win any costume contests (she missed the deadlines, she did win OUR contest. Your limited edition Diamond Exclusive Green Cosmic Angela is on its way!

SPAWN

MOVIE PLAYSETS

The Graveyard Playset



The Final Battle Playset

Spawn Alley Playset

SPAWN

MOVIE PLAYSETS

Three d ramas from ast summer s $60 m lion box office h t!

Ava lable on toy she ves everywhere in Jan uary www.spawn.com

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WIZARD®
The Comics Magazine

5TH ANNUAL FAN AWARDS BALLOT

The 5th Annual *Wizard* Fan Awards are upon us and it's time for you, the comic fans of the world, to determine the best of the best! Comic fan voting will determine the winners of these prestigious awards. Nominees are provided as determined through a "Wizard World" America Online poll. If you don't like any of the nominees, feel free to vote for anybody or anything you want...including the li'l diddy you're holding in your hands!

You can use this ballot (or a photocopy) to vote, as long as you follow these rules and regulations:

1) Only material that shipped in the calendar year 1997 is eligible.
2) You may vote for only *one* entry in any category. Multiple votes are all disqualified.
3) You need not vote for a listed nominee. Write-in candidates are perfectly acceptable.
4) You may send in only *one* ballot. All multiple ballots are disqualified.

FAVORITE WRITER
- ❑ Kurt Busiek
- ❑ Peter David
- ❑ Garth Ennis
- ❑ Grant Morrison
- ❑ Mark Waid
- ❑ write-in_____

FAVORITE PENCILER
- ❑ Adam Kubert
- ❑ Jim Lee
- ❑ Joe Madureira
- ❑ Marc Silvestri
- ❑ Michael Turner
- ❑ write-in_____

FAVORITE INKER
- ❑ Batt
- ❑ Mark Farmer
- ❑ Todd McFarlane
- ❑ Jimmy Palmiotti
- ❑ Tim Townsend
- ❑ write-in_____

FAVORITE PAINTER
- ❑ Joe Jusko
- ❑ Glenn Fabry
- ❑ Glen Orbik
- ❑ Jerry Ordway
- ❑ Alex Ross
- ❑ write-in_____

FAVORITE COLORIST
- ❑ Digital Chameleon
- ❑ Electric Crayon
- ❑ Liquid Graphics
- ❑ Patrick Martin
- ❑ Tom McCraw
- ❑ write-in_____

FAVORITE LETTERER
- ❑ Todd Klein
- ❑ Tom Orzechowski
- ❑ Clem Robins
- ❑ Richard Starkings and Comicraft
- ❑ John Workman
- ❑ write-in_____

FAVORITE EDITOR
- ❑ Axel Alonso
- ❑ Tom Brevoort
- ❑ Kevin Dooley
- ❑ Archie Goodwin
- ❑ Bob Harras
- ❑ write-in_____

FAVORITE HERO
- ❑ Batman
- ❑ Hulk
- ❑ Spawn
- ❑ Spider-Man
- ❑ Wolverine
- ❑ write-in_____

FAVORITE HEROINE
- ❑ Catwoman
- ❑ Psylocke
- ❑ Rogue
- ❑ Supergirl
- ❑ Witchblade
- ❑ write-in_____

FAVORITE VILLAIN
- ❑ Baron Zemo
- ❑ Bastion
- ❑ Darkseid
- ❑ Dr. Doom
- ❑ Holiday
- ❑ write-in_____

FAVORITE SUPPORTING CHARACTER
- ❑ Cassidy
- ❑ Commissioner Gordon
- ❑ Franklin Richards
- ❑ Moira McTaggert
- ❑ Oracle
- ❑ write-in_____

FAVORITE ONGOING SERIES
- ❑ *Astro City*
- ❑ *Incredible Hulk*
- ❑ *JLA*
- ❑ *Spawn*
- ❑ *Uncanny X-Men*
- ❑ write-in_____

FAVORITE ONE-SHOT OR MINI-SERIES
- ❑ *Batman: The Long Halloween*
- ❑ *Heroes Reborn: The Return*
- ❑ Tangent Comics
- ❑ *Uncle Sam*
- ❑ *X-Men/WildC.A.T.s*
- ❑ write-in_____

FAVORITE PUBLISHER
- ❑ DC
- ❑ Marvel
- ❑ Todd McFarlane Productions
- ❑ Top Cow Productions
- ❑ WildStorm Productions
- ❑ write-in_____

FAVORITE COMIC MERCHANDISE
- ❑ Dark Knight Returns 10th Anniversary statue, DC Retail Products
- ❑ Green Goblin bust, Legends in 3 Dimensions
- ❑ Harley Quinn action figure, Kenner
- ❑ Legion of Super-Heroes Flight Ring, DC Retail Products
- ❑ Spider-Man web-shooters, Toy Biz
- ❑ write-in_____

FAVORITE COMIC TV OR MOVIE PROJECT
- ❑ "The Batman/Superman Adventures"
- ❑ "Space Ghost Coast to Coast"
- ❑ "Spawn" HBO cartoon
- ❑ "Spawn" movie
- ❑ "Spider-Man: The Animated Series"
- ❑ write-in_____

COMICS' GREATEST MOMENT—1997
- ❑ The "A" returns to Captain America's mask, *Captain America* #7
- ❑ Marvel's heroes return to the Marvel Universe, *Heroes Reborn: The Return* #4
- ❑ Return of Magneto, *Uncanny X-Men* #350
- ❑ Superman wrestles the angel Asmodel in hand-to-hand combat, *JLA* #7
- ❑ Thunderbolts revealed as the Masters of Evil, *Thunderbolts* #1
- ❑ write-in_____

GET YOUR BALLOT IN BY
February 27, 1998

Send your ballot to:
***Wizard* Fan Awards**
c/o Wizard Press
P.O. Box 118
Congers, NY 10920-0118

Move it, cowboy! That deadline's February 27, 1998, and all ballots postmarked after that date are null and void!

Employee Search

The Todd McFarlane family of companies is looking for new employees in a variety of different professions. Are you an energetic and self-motivated individual who has a minimum of three years experience in any of the following areas and are willing to relocate?

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Please fax your resume to *602-598-8766*, attention: Terry Fitzgerald, President. Or, mail to: *Employee Search, P.O. Box 27228, Tempe, AZ 85285.*

All resumes will be held in the strictest of confidence. Sculptors, please do not send any photos you would like returned. The Todd McFarlane family of corporations are located in *Los Angeles, CA, Phoenix, AZ, Detroit, MI and Bloomingdale, NJ.* All business entities are equal opportunity employers and each offer extensive benefit packages.

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SPAWN

Book [5] five

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